

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 745

DAR ES SALAAM FOR USDEL SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, WA
SUBJ: NAMIBIA: FOREIGN MINISTER'S AIDE FEELS POSITIVE ABOUT
PROPOSALS

1. SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTER BOTH'S AIDE SAID TODAY THERE HAS
BEEN A POSITIVE CHANGE IN PROSPECTS FOR SOUTH AFRICAN APPROVAL
OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL. DTA DELEGATION, HE REPORTS, IN A
MEETING WITH VORSTER WERE SERIOUS AND RESPONSIBLE ABOUT THE
PROPOSAL. END SUMMARY

2. POLITICAL COUNSELOR AND BRITISH EMBASSY MINISTER SUMMER-
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HAYES SAW FOREIGN MINISTER PIK BOTHA'S AIDE, NEIL VAN HEERDEN,
TODAY, APRIL 13. VAN HEERDEN WAS CLEARLY ENCOURAGING ABOUT THE
PROSPECTS OF SAG APPROVAL OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL. CHOOSING HIS
WORDS CAREFULLY, HE SAID THAT HE FELT POSITIVE ABOUT THE SITUATION
AND THAT "THE DRIFT IS GOOD". VAN HEERDEN SAID THAT THERE WAS
A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN THE OUTLOOK COMPARED TO TWO WEEKS
AGO. WHEN ASKED WHAT HAD BROUGHT ABOUT THE CHANGE, HE REPLIED

THAT THERE WERE MANY COMPLEX FACTORS THAT WENT INTO THE SITUATION. HE REMARKED "WE NOW HAVE A GOOD HANDLE ON THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN CREATING THE MOST OPPOSITION".

3. VAN HEERDEN SAID THE CABINET MEETING YESTERDAY, APRIL 12, HAD ONLY BRIEFLY DISCUSSED THE NAMIBIAN SITUATION AND HAD AGREED TO WAIT UNTIL HEARING THE FINAL VIEWS OF THE INTERNAL PARTIES BEFORE MAKING A DECISION. ACCORDING TO VAN HEERDEN, THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD PROVIDED EACH MINISTER BEFORE THE MEETING A FOUR-PAGE PAPER ANALYZING IN "CLINICAL AND OBJECTIVE TERMS" THE WESTERN PROPOSAL AND ITS IMPLICATIONS.

4. VAN HEERDEN SAID BOTHA WAS "VERY PLEASED" WITH THE OUTCOME OF HIS AND VORSTER'S MEETINGS THIS MORNING WITH THE DEMOCRATIC TURNHALLE ALLIANCE DELEGATION. VAN HEERDEN SAID THE DTA GROUP HAD SHOWN A SERIOUS AND RESPONSIBLE APPROACH TO THE PROPOSAL. THEY WERE SEEKING, VAN HEERDEN EXPLAINED, AMPLIFICATION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS AS WELL AS INFO ON THE "PRIVATE ASSURANCES" THAT HAD BEEN REPORTED IN THE PRESS. VAN HEERDEN SAID THE AREAS OF CONCERN FOR THE DTA WERE: THE NEED FOR AN EARLY DEFINITE DATE FOR ELECTIONS; THE RELIABILITY OF PROCEDURES FOR ASSURING OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL NAMIBIANS HELD IN ZAMBIA TO RETURN; THE IMPARTIALITY OF AHTASAARI AS SPECIAL REP; AND THE NEED TO ASSURE A CEASEFIRE FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE PROCESS. (IN A CONVERSATION LAST NIGHT, APRIL 12, WITH SUMMERHAYES, MUDGE HAD ALSO RAISED THESE AREAS OF CONCERN AND IN ADDITION HAD CONFIDENTIAL

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EXPRESSED INTEREST IN THE QUESTION OF THE RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES BETWEEN THE A-G AND THE SPECIAL REP. SUMMERHAYES SAID THAT MUDGE'S OVERALL APPROACH WAS ALSO ENCOURAGING).

5. ACCORDING TO VAN HEERDEN, THE DTA GROUP IS RETURNING TO WINDHOEK TODAY AND WILL CONVENE A MEETING OF ITS EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO DECIDE ON ITS FINAL POSITION. BOTHA, HE SAID, HAD PLANNED TO FLY TO WINDHOEK THIS WEEKEND TO RECEIVE THE A-G'S REPORT, INCLUDING THE POSITION OF THE DTA, BUT BECAUSE OF THE VANCE-OWEN VISIT TO PRETORIA, HE WILL DELAY THIS MISSION UNTIL THE EARLY PART OF NEXT WEEK.

6. VAN HEERDEN ASKED ABOUT WHAT WAS EXPECTED IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL. THERE WAS A TACTICAL CONSIDERATION FOR THE SAG, HE REMARKED, IN WHEN AS WELL AS HOW TO RESPOND. HE ASKED IF EARLY SAG APPROVAL MIGHT NOT WORK AGAINST SECURITY COUNCIL ACCEPTANCE. (IN RESPONSE IT WAS STATED THAT SOUTH AFRICAN ACCEPTANCE COULD ONLY ADD MOMENTUM TO THE PROPOSAL. AN ARGUS STORY THIS AFTERNOON REPORTS THE POSSIBILITY RAISED BY VAN HEERDEN AS A FACTOR IN SAG DELIBERATIONS). VAN HEERDEN HASTENED TO ADD, HOWEVER, THAT THE SAG WAS NOT TIMING ITS REPLY TO UN DEVELOPMENTS. HE PERSONALLY FELT SOUTH AFRICA HAD NO INTEREST IN DELAYING

A RESPONSE. HE WONDERED IF THERE WAS NOT SOME DANGER IN THE SECRETARY GENERAL REPORTING BACK TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL WITH DETAILS ON IMPLEMENTATION THAT COULD CREATE PROBLEMS. HE SAW THE ADVANTAGES IN THE APPOINTMENT OF AHTASAARI AS SECRETARY GENERAL PROVIDED HE WAS GENUINELY IMPARTIAL, BUT, HE SAID, WE CANNOT BLAME SOUTH AFRICA FOR BEING SKEPTICAL. HE ALSO ASKED IF WE HAD ANY INFO ABOUT THE NEWSPAPER REPORT OF A RECENT DECISION BY THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES TO PROVIDE \$500,000 TO SWAPO FOR REFUGEE ASSISTANCE IN SOUTHERN ANGOLA. (HE WAS TOLD THAT NEITHER OF OUR MISSIONS HAD ANY INFO ON THIS SUBJECT).

7. COMMENT: VAN HEERDEN'S COMMENTS WERE PROBABLY MADE WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE FONMIN. HIS REMARKS, TOGETHER WITH THE DTA'S APPROACH (IN PARTICULAR ITS FAILURE TO OBJECT TO ANY OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

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CONCRETE PROVISIONS OR PRINCIPLES OF THE PROPOSAL), AND VORSTER'S BRIEF STATEMENT IN PARLIAMENT TODAY (REPORTED SEPTEL), SUGGEST THAT WE HAVE A GOOD CHANCE OF RECEIVING A BASICALLY POSITIVE RESPONSE FROM THE SAG.

8. EVEN IF THERE IS NOW A FAVORABLE TREND WITHIN THE CABINET TOWARD ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSAL, THE SITUATION, AS VAN HEERDEN INDICATED, IS PROBABLY STILL QUITE TENUOUS AND THE TIDE COULD BE REVERSED. EMB VIEWS ON WHAT WE MIGHT EXPECT ON THIS SUBJECT DURING THE PRETORIA VANCE/OWEN/BOTHA MEETING ON APRIL 16 WILL BE PROVIDED IN SEPTEL.
BOWDLER

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